

Message Text

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EXDIS - FOR MR. HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, FR

SUBJECT: FURTHER REACTION TO BROWN-HABIB VISIT

1. FOLLOWING ARE EXERPTS FROM DCM SHOESMITH'S EXDIS CABLE OF JUNE 1, 1977, TOKYO 8061. BEGIN TEXT.
2. JUDGING FROM FOLLOW-UP CONVERSATIONS I AND OTHER EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE HAD IN PAST FEW DAYS WITH VICE MINISTERS ARITA AND MARUYAMA, DIRECTOR GENERAL YAMAZAKI, AND OTHER MOFA AND JDA OFFICIALS, BROWN-HABIB VISIT FULLY SATISFIED JAPANESE NEED FOR CONSULTATION AT THIS STAGE OF TROOP-WITHDRAWAL DECISION IMPLEMENTATION, WHILE DISCUSSIONS DID NOT BY ANY MEANS ALLAY ALL JAPANESE QUALMS, MANY GOJ CONCERNS WERE MET AND CONSCIENTIOUS EFFORT BY GENERAL BROWN AND UNDERSECRETARY HABIB TO ANSWER QUESTIONS DIRECTLY WAS MUCH APPRECIATED.
3. OFALL POINTS RAISED DURING DISCUSSIONS, JAPANESE

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APPEAR LEAST SATISFIED BY REASONS GIVEN FOR WITHDRAWAL

DECISION. WE HAVE STUCK BY EXPLANATIONS PROVIDED BY BROWN AND HABIB, CALLING ATTENTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS REMARKS OF MAY 26, AND HAVE ATTEMPTED TO DISSUADE JAPANESE FROM SEEKING ADDITIONAL EXPLANATIONS, BUT THEY ARE LIKELY TO REMAIN CONVINCED THAT A LARGE MEASURE OF DOMESTIC U.S.

POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS WENT INTO DECISION.

4. YAMAZAKI ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT FONMIN HATOYAMA HAD INTENDED TO INDICATE GOJ PREFERENCE FOR A U.S. STATEMENT THAT WITHDRAWAL PROGRAM WOULD BE REVIEWED PERIODICALLY IN LIGHT OF INTERNATIONAL SITUATION. WHILE WE HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT TOTALLY UNFORESEEN MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS WOULD NECESSITATE REVIEW OF ESTABLISHED POLICIES IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WE NOTED THAT THERE WAS NOTHING TO BE GAINED FROM SUGGESTING POSSIBILITY OF RECONSIDERATION OF DECISION THAT HAD BEEN MADE.

5. YAMAZAKI ASKED WHAT U.S. WOULD DO IF CONGRESS FAILED TO APPROPRIATE ASSISTANCE FUNDS FOR ROK REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN MILITARY BALANCE. WE, OF COURSE, RESPONDED THAT A MAJOR EFFECT OF WITHDRAWAL SHOULD BE TO FACILITATE SUCH APPROPRIATIONS. IN MAKING ABOVE POINTS, JAPANESE HAVE BEEN QUICK TO QUALIFY THEIR REMARKS BY NOTING THAT MOST IMPORTANT THING WAS FOR ROK TO BE WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH WITHDRAWAL PLANS.

6. VICE MINISTER MARUYAMA MENTIONED CONCERN THAT ONCE WITHDRAWN, REINTRODUCTION OF GROUND FORCES IN A CRISIS SITUATION MIGHT FURTHER INCREASE TENSION, WHEREAS CONTINUED PRESENCE OF A BATTALION OR BRIGADE MIGHT ACT AS A DETERRENT. ANOTHER QUESTION COMING FROM UNIFORMED SIDE OF HOUSE, PERTAINED TO COMMAND AND CONTROL. JDA WAS HAPPY TO RECEIVE EXPLANATION IN REGARD TO CONTINUITY OF U.N. COMMAND AND ARMISTICE AGREEMENT, BUT WOULD LIKE TO HAVE
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PURSUED PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF WITHDRAWAL FOR ON-THE-GROUND COMMAND CHANNELS.

7. VICE MINISTER ARITA IN TWO CONVERSATIONS RETURNED TO PREVIOUSLY VOICED THEME ABOUT REACTION TO WITHDRAWALS ELSEWHERE IN ASIA. HE SAID JAPAN WOULD HAVE NO MAJOR DIFFICULTY IN ACCEPTING U.S. DECISION, BUT ASKED THAT WE GIVE ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION TO SETTING AT REST IMPRESSION AMONG NUMBER OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEADERS THAT GROUND-FORCE

WITHDRAWAL IN KOREA WAS STEP IN SERIES OF U.S. MILITARY RETRENCHMENTS IN ASIA, WITH MORE TO FOLLOW. IN SAME VEIN, MARUYAMA SAID JAPANESE WOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS POSED BY OTHER ASIANS (HE UNDERSTOOD LEE KUAN YEW HAD RAISED KOREAN TROOP WITHDRAWALS DURING HIS TOKYO VISIT), BUT THAT IT PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE WISE FOR JAPANESE OFFICIALS TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN RAISING THE SUBJECT LEST THEY SEEM TO BE ACTING AS SURROGATES FOR THE U.S. END TEXT.

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